



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 8 May 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
8 MAY 1967

1. South Vietnam

Pressures are mounting on Chief of State Thieu to abandon his undeclared but very real interest in the presidency.

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For his part, Ky seems to be becoming increasingly irritated by Thieu's silence.

2. North Vietnam

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3. Cyprus

The weekend passed quietly despite the ominous portents on Friday. The Communists carried out disciplined demonstrations throughout the island, but were careful not to provoke the military.

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4. Greece

King Constantine, still painfully aware of the weakness of his position, continues on a course of cautious cooperation with the coup managers while trying to avoid becoming publicly identified with them. He told Ambassador Talbot late last week that one of his prime objectives is to encourage his senior generals gradually to reassert their authority over the middle-level officers who pulled off the coup.

The King went on to say that he is doing what he can to press for an early return to constitutionality. The first small step toward this goal was taken last week when the cabinet agreed to appoint a committee to review the constitution and, ultimately, to submit the revised charter to a plebiscite. No timing for the process has yet been agreed on.

As for Andreas Papandreou, who is shortly to go on trial for treason, the King said he had been assured by regime leaders that there will be no attempt to get a death penalty.

5. Dominican Republic

The political storm touched off by last week's firebomb attack on a prominent opposition senator is growing worse. The Dominican Revolutionary Party, of which the senator is a member, has called on its congressional bloc to boycott congress until effective measures are taken against terrorism.

President Balaguer is on the spot. His enemies are accusing him of fostering the climate of terrorism by bringing back thugs associated with the Trujillo tyranny. Public reaction to the latest incident has been sharp and critical of the President.

6. Panama

The United States Intelligence Board has just approved a Special Estimate on Panama, with these conclusions:

- Increased tension and political turbulence are likely as the upcoming presidential campaign interacts with the highly emotional issues involved in the Canal treaty negotiations.
- The elite families long in control may be hard pressed to get one of their own elected president next year. The challenge comes from [redacted] Arnulfo Arias, who heads the country's only mass movement.
- Much depends on when the treaty negotiations are completed. If President Robles is able to present the treaties for ratification by September, they might be somewhat less a disruptive campaign issue.
- Otherwise, there is small chance of getting satisfactory treaties before a new administration takes over in October 1968.

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7. Egypt

The Egyptians, while still pretending that they are neutral bystanders in the Yemen situation, are now saying that the two US AID officers being detained in Yemen will be released by 15 May. Yemeni officials continue to talk of an impending trial for the two "guilty" officers.

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